

MAYOR & COUNCIL AGENDA COVER SHEET

MEETING DATE:

March 31, 2003

RESPONSIBLE STAFF:

Cindy Hines, Olde Towne
Coordinator

AGENDA ITEM:

(please check one)

	Presentation
	Proclamation/Certificate
	Appointment
	Public Hearing
	Historic District
	Consent Item
	Ordinance
	Resolution
	Policy Discussion
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Work Session Discussion Item
	Other:

PUBLIC HEARING HISTORY:

(Please complete this section if agenda item
is a public hearing)

Introduced	
Advertised	
Hearing Date	
Record Held Open	
Policy Discussion	

TITLE:

Review of Design Alternatives for Proposed Olde Towne
Clock/Tower Plaza Project

SUPPORTING BACKGROUND:

As per their contract to provide a Schematic Design and Sitework Study for the proposed Olde Towne Clock Tower/Plaza project, Heath Design Group will present for review several different design alternatives of the plaza area. An initial Clock Tower/Plaza Design Meeting was held on January 29, 2003. Input gathered at that meeting was instrumental in providing design direction. Attached is a summary of the design meeting.

In addition to the design alternatives, Heath Design Group is also in the process of creating a 3-dimensional display that they hope to have ready in time for the presentation. The display will illustrate the height of the clock tower in regard to its surroundings. Additionally, they will have several boards depicting plaza elements, such as benches and materials for constructing decorative, low walls.

Based on input given and choices made at the meeting, Heath Design will work up a final design complete with cost estimate.

DESIRED OUTCOME:

Selection of final design and/or elements to work into final design.

Clock Tower/Plaza Design Meeting
Wednesday, January 29, 2003, 7:30 p.m.
The Gallery, City Hall

I. Introductions

Meeting attendees included members from the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee (HPAC), members from the Olde Towne Advisory Committee (OTAC), business owners and residents.

II. Brief Overview of Clock Tower/Plaza Project

It was noted that, though the project had a long history, the overview would begin at the point in time in which the Olde Towne Advisory Committee picked up the project.

In January '02 a door-to-door survey was conducted to gauge the community's support for the project. The survey indicated overwhelming support for the project on the condition that it result in the loss of no more than 4 parking spaces. One business owner went as far as saying, "I regret the loss of 3 – 4 parking spaces. I support the proposal as long as there is no future loss of parking spaces based on future plan modifications."

The proposed project was presented to the Mayor and City Council at the January 14, 2002 Work Session. Community members turned out to voice their support of the overall project and of option D which called for extending the current plaza to the train station and deepening it by 10 feet. Following the work session, the Mayor and City Council authorized the City to put forth a request for quote for Schematic Design Services.

Meanwhile, the Clock Tower/Plaza project was identified as a candidate for Community Legacy Grant Funds. On August 1, 2002, Grants Administrator Louise Kauffman and Olde Towne Coordinator Cindy Hines conducted a joint presentation to HPAC and OTAC on the Olde Towne Clock Tower/Plaza Project and on the plans to pursue Community Legacy Funds. That effort resulted in an award of \$135,000.

On November 6, 2002, a contract was signed with Heath Design Group to provide a Schematic Design and Sitework Study. This is the first in a series of meetings that the Heath Design Group will hold in order to complete the design portion of the project. It was stressed that the purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for community members to offer input to members of the Heath Design Group. In this regard, it was mentioned that there were individuals who believed the scope of the project should be widened. However, it was noted that Option D was the plan publicly supported by the community and authorized for further development by the Mayor and City Council. Therefore, the meeting must

focus on Option D. It was noted that items to be addressed should include: plaza uses, identification of primary and secondary users, design elements and specific site challenges.

III. Heath Design Group – Discussion and Community Input

Following the overview, the meeting was turned over to Mark North (Heath Design Group) and Vic Bryant (Macris, Hendricks and Glascock). In describing their services, Mark defined a schematic design as a single, line drawing showing the plan, elevations and what the project was about. He stressed that it was not detailed enough to serve as building plans. It was reported that, within the last eight weeks, Macris Hendricks and Glascock had performed topographic and full surveys of the site and that building height information would soon be added to the layout. It was noted that the schematic design would include plaza design, landscaping elements, and the tower structure as well as any special elements.

Following are thoughts and issues discussed and questions raised throughout the evening:

Re: Site and Modifications

HPAC member Cathy Drzyzgula stated that she was originally skeptical about the appropriateness of a clock tower near the Train Station (a National Register site), but, after having researched the major influence that trains had on the movement to normalize time and synchronize clocks, she no longer took exception to the site on those grounds. HPAC members did stress the need to show consideration of the Train Station's designation as a National Register site.

It was asked, "How future changes to the Fishman Building may affect the Clock Tower/Plaza Project?" It was stated that the plaza area would not be affected by any future development. It was noted that one of the reasons this site was chosen was that it was developmentally independent from the surrounding area.

Re: Design

A suggestion was made that the plans for the Fishman Building be incorporated into the plan and that further expansion of the plaza be considered. David Shayt stated that in his mind "the clock tower was driving the project and cautioned that it not be an after thought to the plaza design, but have elements reflected in the design." He listed "sight lines, vantage points, and best placement for hearing the bell" as points to consider. Council member Henry Marraffa agreed stating, "the clock tower takes precedence." Assistant City Manager Tony Tomasello addressed the issue of further plaza expansion stating, "A 1995 plan showed liner buildings on this site and that the merchants absolutely, unanimously objected to losing any parking." One committee member theorized that the closure of the

South Summit Avenue entrance to the lot may make it less convenient causing less people to use it thereby lessening opposition to future expansion of the plaza.

It was anticipated that the primary users of the plaza would be the “lunch crowd.” However, the consensus was that it should be designed to encourage multiple uses throughout the day and evening. Such uses might include: art shows, “street musicians,” exhibits and specialized vendors. Additionally, as the plaza will be a gathering place, it was suggested that a message board be incorporated into the design. It was noted that the current message board was outdated.

HPAC members voiced concern in regard to the size of the tower in relation to the plaza area and urged care be taken in regard to the tower proportions. David Shayt agreed, but noted that the tower would need a substantial base. Addressing the tower’s design, David cautioned against “cookie-cutter” clock towers, similar to those used in shopping centers. Conversely, he made it clear that there was no support for a top-of-the-line tower either. He suggested a quality, mid-grade tower that would do justice to the center of town.

In looking toward possible future opportunities, it was asked if the tower design would be able to accommodate a vault and repeaters for cell phone service. Assistant City Manager Tony Tomasello noted that he had had a discussion with a cell phone provider just yesterday and that they were definitely not interested in installing equipment in enclosed areas and only mildly interested in installing equipment in open areas such as the parking garage.

Re: Cost

Mark North noted that firm design costs would be part of Phase II work for which the City had not yet contracted. They will, however, be able to provide broad-based costs for the final design. Committee members wanted the broad-based costs to include a break-out of the costs of the clock tower from those of the plaza layout and landscaping.

Additional points to consider included:

- Use of design techniques to integrate the Community Museum, Train Station and proposed History Park
- Consideration of lot’s use on Olde Towne Day and related access issues
- Availability of utility services for street performers and artists
- Train (Museum’s rolling stock) is a “movable wall” and could be moved back to provide a glimpse of the plaza
- Illumination, ease of maintenance/access and vandalism control
- Consideration of barriers to protect pedestrians from close-in roadway. (Decorative bollards can also double as light fixtures.)
- Use by bicyclists

SOUTH SUMMIT AVENUE

EAST DIAMOND AVENUE

TOWER

